

GOLF AUSTRALIA RULES

NEWSLETTER: Summer 2017



Rules to Undergo Major Changes

The R&A has vowed to hear all concerns and views as golf's governing body announces sweeping changes to the Rules of Golf.

David Rickman, The R&A's Executive Director of Governance, said all feedback great and small would be welcomed as part of the rules modernisation process, announced jointly with the USGA on March 1st.

A large reduction in the number of rules has been complemented by increased brevity and clarity in their application in the

proposed changes, planned for a 1st January, 2019 global introduction.

Among more than 30 substantial changes are:

- Penalties for accidentally moving your ball while searching for it or accidentally moving your ball or ball marker on the green will be scrapped;
- Time allowed for ball searches will be reduced from five to three minutes;
- A ball being dropped will be able to be released at any height above the ground;

Summer 2017: In this edition



TARS

Matt Field gives a review of The R&A's Tournament Administrators and Referees School



A Referee's Perspective

David Blake details his experience at the Fiji International.



Rules Quiz

Test your knowledge with Brian's quiz



- There will no longer be a penalty for hitting an unattended flagstick with a putt from on the green;
- Touching or removal of loose impediments in a bunker will be permissible; and
- Almost all damage, including spike marks and animal damage, will be able to be repaired on the green.

Rickman said he hoped for and expected great feedback on these and all the changes to the Rules of Golf from Australian players.

Asked whether he would like a collective response from Australia or myriad single complaints or inquiries, Rickman said the R&A's online feedback system would "welcome and handle both".

"I suspect the Australian golf industry will have an interest in that (group response), but we'd be delighted to hear the views of Mary from Adelaide – we'll have a feedback form online and we've designed that to allow people to try to give feedback in a reasonably structured way," he said from St Andrews. That's all about 'we are listening'. This is a real and proper consultation process and that's the best way for us to be able to then process the responses – hopefully the wonders of the internet will give us the ability to receive all of those comments in a usable way."

Rickman stressed the Rules changes remained proposals and that a six-month feedback period would now be employed around the world.

"I would confirm that these are just proposals at this stage – we have taken time to produce them and they're not frivolous; we have tried to think them through," he said.

"But there may be something we haven't thought of, a nuance or an unintended consequence of some of these ideas, so we are expecting these proposals to be edited and refined over the next 12-18 months.

At the moment I think the overall shape of this code is reasonably close to where we might be in 2019, but I would not be surprised at all if there were a number of changes made between now and when they're finalised."

Rickman said while the Rules of Golf were constantly evolving, "this scale of change and review happens less frequently – probably 1952 and 1984 are the most recent times we've done something of this scale".

"Certainly it's an extensive review and we believe the changes will be good for the sport. We have aimed the revision at the game as a whole, so irrespective of your ability and where in the world you play, we have tried to make these rules relevant to all golfers and easier to understand and apply. So the overall goals are significant and I hope relatively clear."

"We are keen to get feedback – to encourage golfers from around the world to let us know if they think the rules will work for them and we hope many people will take the opportunity to let us know what they think."

Rickman said the shorter ball search time and other promotions of faster play – including the encouragement of "ready golf" and a recommendation of not more than 40 seconds before your shot once it's your turn – were important to the sport. But he said some initiatives could not be mandated globally.

"We are introducing a number of pace-of-play initiatives ... we've actively encouraged players to play promptly and a guideline for the first time ever that calls out 40 seconds as the absolute maximum time," he said. We're also actively encouraging clubs to check their own time pars and beyond all of that, a committee if it wants to, can be more prescriptive and detailed and seek to encourage play at a quicker pace.

It's a big issue for the sport, there are many solutions and the Rules have to play their part. But I think it better to leave it to local clubs to address the particular issues they're facing. Those issues vary and therefore the solutions are different. I think this strikes the right balance. Certainly, in the elite game, we're focused on penalising players and 18 months ago we had a pace of play conference and I was particularly attracted by the ideas of a number of clubs that actually reward fast play. That might be the ability to buy something cheaper in the pro shop or a free drink at the bar if you go round in a certain time.

But we need a mix of rules to work in elite and club environments where at least 95% of golf is played."

The full joint R&A and USGA Media Release follows.

Full details of the announcement are available from the following page of the Golf Australia website – www.golf.org.au/modernisation

This Golf Australia webpage provides access to all of the following information:

- An overview document which explains the process and the key changes.
- A document containing one page summaries of the key changes.
- A document that provides additional information in the form of "Frequently Asked Questions".
- A full draft of the new Rules.
- The R&A's on-line feedback survey.

The full joint R&A and USGA Media Release

The R&A and the USGA announce proposed changes to modernise Rules of Golf

1 March 2017, St Andrews, Scotland and Far Hills, N.J., USA:

The R&A and the USGA have unveiled a preview of the proposed new Rules of Golf, as part of a joint initiative to modernise the Rules and make them easier to understand and apply.

The online release of this preview begins a six-month feedback and evaluation period during which all golfers worldwide can learn about the proposed changes and provide input before they are finalised in 2018 and take effect on 1 January 2019.

The announcement follows a comprehensive review process that began in 2012 with a working group of key R&A and USGA Rules administrators, professional tour officials and other Rules experts. While the Rules are revised every four years, this is the first fundamental review since 1984, and was established to ensure the Rules fit the needs of today's game and the way it is played around the world.

David Rickman, Executive Director – Governance at The R&A, said, "Our aim is to make the Rules easier to understand and to apply for all golfers. We have looked at every Rule to try to find ways to make them more intuitive and straightforward, and we believe we have identified many significant improvements. It is important that the Rules continue to evolve and remain in tune with the way the modern game is played, but we have been careful not to change the game's longstanding principles and character."

"We are excited and encouraged by the potential this work brings, both through the proposed new Rules and the opportunities to use technology to deliver them," said Thomas Pagel, Senior Director of Rules & Amateur Status for the USGA. "We look forward to an ongoing conversation with golfers during the feedback period in the months ahead."

The proposed 24 new Rules, reduced from the current 34, have been written in a user-friendly style with shorter sentences, commonly used phrases, bulleted lists and explanatory headings. The initiative also focuses on assessing the overall consistency, simplicity and fairness of the Rules for play.

The Rules are currently delivered in more than 30 languages, and the proposed wording will support easier translation worldwide. When adopted, the Rules will be supported by technology that allows the use of images, videos and graphics.

Highlights of the proposed Rule changes include:

Elimination or reduction of "ball moved" penalties: There will be no penalty for accidentally moving a ball on the putting green or in searching for a ball; and a player is not responsible for causing a ball to move unless it is "virtually certain" that he or she did so.

Relaxed putting green rules: There will be no penalty if a ball played from the putting green hits an unattended flagstick in the hole; players may putt without having the flagstick attended or removed. Players may repair spike marks and other damage made by shoes, animal damage and other damage on the putting green and there is no penalty for merely touching the line of putt.

Relaxed rules for "penalty areas" (currently called "water hazards"): Red and yellow-marked penalty areas may cover areas of desert, jungle, lava rock, etc., in addition to areas of water; expanded use of red penalty areas where lateral relief is allowed; and there will be no penalty for moving loose impediments or touching the ground or water in a penalty area.

Relaxed bunker rules: There will be no penalty for moving loose impediments in a bunker or for generally touching the sand with a hand or club. A limited set of restrictions (such as not grounding

the club right next to the ball) is kept to preserve the challenge of playing from the sand; however, an extra relief option is added for an unplayable ball in a bunker, allowing the ball to be played from outside the bunker with a two-stroke penalty.

Relying on player integrity: A player's "reasonable judgment" when estimating or measuring a spot, point, line, area or distance will be upheld, even if video evidence later shows it to be wrong; and elimination of announcement procedures when lifting a ball to identify it or to see if it is damaged.

Pace-of-play support: Reduced time for searching for a lost ball (from five minutes to three); affirmative encouragement of "ready golf" in stroke play; recommending that players take no more than 40 seconds to play a stroke and other changes intended to help with pace of play.

Simplified way of taking relief: A new procedure for taking relief by dropping a ball in and playing it from a specific relief area; relaxed procedures for dropping a ball, allowing the ball to be dropped from just above the ground or any growing thing or other object on the ground.

A series of materials have also been prepared to explain the proposed Rule changes and provide background on the initiative.

Found on randa.org and usga.org/rules, they include:

- **Overview of the Rules Modernisation Initiative:** goals, proposed changes and process for implementation in 2019
- **Draft New Rules of Golf for 2019:** the full text of proposed Rules 1-24 and Definitions
- **Draft Player's Edition of the New Rules of Golf for 2019:** Written from the perspective of "you" the golfer, this shorter version covers the most commonly used Rules and is meant to be the rule book golfers will use when finalised and adopted in 2019
- **Explanation for Each Major Proposed Change in the New Rules of Golf for 2019:** Short summaries of each major proposed change
- **Summary chart of major changes**
- **Videos and Infographics:** Visual explanations of the proposed Rules.

Golfers are encouraged to review the proposed changes and submit feedback online via worldwide survey technology that can be accessed at randa.org or usga.org/rules from now until 31 August 2017.

The feedback will be reviewed by The R&A and the USGA in establishing the approved final version of golf's new Rules. These are due to be released in mid-2018 ahead of a 1 January 2019 implementation. Social media users can also follow the discussion using #GolfRules2019.

Players are reminded that the current 2016 Edition of the Rules of Golf remain in force when playing, posting scores or competing, until the new Rules are officially adopted by The R&A and the USGA in 2019. The Rules of Amateur Status and the Rules of Equipment Standards were not part of this review process.

Fiji International: A Referee's Perspective

One of the fascinations of golf is that it is played all over the world, by people of many races and tongues, on courses of hugely varying standards. Accordingly, the experiences gained by a travelling rules official are also many and varied.

David Blake, Golf Victoria's Golf Services Officer, relates two situations he was involved with while officiating at the 2016 Fiji International.

An interesting situation arose in the first round when a player was having an absolutely awful round. He was hitting shots that beginners would be embarrassed about, and as any shot at the Natadola Bay course that is off line gets punished, this player was certainly on his way to a century!

A call was heard over the radio as to whether the "One Ball" Condition was in play, and what is the penalty if such a condition is breached.

Firstly, let's go through the "One Ball" Condition as per Appendix I Part B 1c., that is applied by all PGA Tour Australasia tournaments.

'If it is desired to prohibit changing brands and models of golf balls during a stipulated round, the following condition is recommended: "Limitation on Balls Used During Round: (Note to Rule 5-1)

(i) "One Ball" Condition

During a stipulated round, the balls a player plays must be of the same brand and model as detailed by a single entry on the current List of Conforming Golf Balls.

Note: If a ball of a different brand and/or model is dropped or placed it may be lifted, without penalty, and the player must then proceed by dropping or placing a proper ball (Rule 20-6).

PENALTY FOR BREACH OF CONDITION

Match play – At the conclusion of the hole at which the breach is discovered, the state of the match is adjusted by deducting one hole for each hole at which a breach occurred; maximum deduction per round – Two holes.

Stroke play – Two strokes for each hole at which any breach occurred; maximum penalty per round – Four strokes (two strokes at each of the first two holes at which any breach occurred).

(ii) Procedure When Breach Discovered

When a player discovers that he has played a ball in breach of this condition, he must abandon that ball before playing from the next teeing ground and complete the round with a proper ball; otherwise, the player is disqualified. If discovery is made during play of a hole and the player elects to substitute a proper ball before completing that hole, the player must place a proper ball on the spot where the ball played in breach of the condition lay.'

So as the above sets out, if a player was to play a ball that was not the brand and model of the one he started with, then he would incur the applicable penalties.

This is where the situation gets interesting - you may be wondering why the player had asked about such a competition condition, or you may have worked it out. It just so happens that due to this player's inability to stay anywhere near the fairway, there was an inverse relationship between the player's score, and the weight of his bag. What made it trickier was that the player wasn't playing a commonly used golf ball, but a lesser played Srixon. The player did ask if he was able to borrow different balls from a playing partner, but as part (ii)



above restricts a player playing a ball in knowledge of the breach, this would result in disqualification after a shot at the next teeing ground.

So what was the outcome?

It was late in the day, so a lot of the players had already departed the facility, reducing the chance of those rare Srixons being found. The Rules referees started asking players around the course if they were a user of the Srixon golf ball, and to make matters worse, it had to be the same Srixon XV Pure White model as the one he started his round with. However, there was one player on the opposite side of the course who was happy to part with one ball (we all thought that was a bit miserly), and then the race was on to deliver this ball to its beneficiary. Alas this wasn't as straight-forward as moving swiftly along the sides of fairways as it would have been at Huntingdale, The Metropolitan or Victoria golf courses, because the Fijian course was carved from a volcanic layout, that intertwines around palm trees, huge crevasses, homeless dogs, the main island road, and previously mentioned dense bush.

A relay was setup so that this ball could get to its intended destination, and the race was on. The referee who was on hand with the player stated 'He should be okay on the 15th' (a short downhill par 3 that most players were hitting wedge into), however as I made mention to, this player was not having a great day, and a blocked wedge found a lateral water hazard 20 metres right of the green.

After the playing partners finished up on the 15th, the ball was delivered to the forlorn recipient who proceeded to get up and down for a total of 6, which included a two stroke penalty for undue delay.

On to the 16th hole, an absolute beast of hole, playing well over its four par courtesy of not only a 180m carry over a lake, but volcanic rock protruding from the landscape, five fairway bunkers, and a 25m increase in topography from tee to green. Luckily the player escaped with a par. Next he moved on to the 17th, with some space to miss right, and thorny bushes (practically a golf ball's cemetery) marked as a lateral water hazard on the left, so our predictable friend decided to rope-hook it straight into said thorny bushes. In a moment of sheer brilliance, from 50m I was able to reduce the search area of the ball to a 4m by 4m square. So in I went, in the hope of finding the only thing that could save this player from a walk of shame. Luckily I managed to find a 'Srixon 1' and the player played under Rule 26-1, then to the middle of the fairway, onto the green and holed a 30 footer for par.

Rules Quiz

By Brian Nesbitt (Victorian Level 2 Referee)

Level 1, No Rule Book Quiz – Rule Headings Please.

The key here is to try to learn Pages 3 and 4 in the Rule Book.

1. Rule 23 Heading is....
2. Rule 19
3. Rule 15
4. Rule 11
5. Rule 7
6. Rule 3
7. Rule 27
8. Rule 22
9. Rule 18
10. Rule 14

Level 1, you may use the Rule Book if necessary here, but I want the Rule number and sub-paragraph as well please.

1. Ball in motion deflected by opponent
2. Wrong ball
3. Undue delay; slow play
4. Placing and replacing ball
5. Playing from a wrong place
6. Touching line of putt

On to the 18th the player bounded, in the knowledge that he could potentially be 5 or 6 shots from the practice range, but alas it was not to be. With all the room on the right hand side, this player decided to challenge my ability to track a small white sphere into another lateral water hazard, and our ability to search for it. With the clock ticking down, all group members were busily searching and the cliché 'like finding a needle in the haystack' was certainly an understatement. Apparently snakes are very rare in Fiji due to the many mongooses that roam the countryside, so there we were diving in amongst said mongooses to see if they knew where the Srixon 1 was.

Alas, it was all in vain and I had now come to the unfortunate point of the story, of disqualifying a professional golfer because he had run out of golf balls during a round!

Whilst on the 'rove', I received a call over the radio to get to the back of the 8th green. On arrival, I approached the group of players to ascertain the situation. The player seeking help had limited English, so used his fellow-competitor to translate what had occurred. What I heard was that the player had played a ball into what he suspected was a water hazard, had then played a provisional ball into a greenside trap, and then found his original ball in long grass behind the putting green. They now wanted to know which ball was in play. I suspected their confusion was whether the player was entitled to play a provisional ball for a ball that was potentially in a hazard, and explained to them that as they weren't sure if it was in a water hazard or lost outside of one, they were entitled to play a provisional ball. I then directed the player to play the original ball, and left them to their own devices.

The other players had finished, so the player in question took one

7. Ball in hazard; prohibited actions
8. Anchoring the club
9. Positioning of caddie or partner behind ball
10. When to re-drop ball

This next Section will require the use of the Decisions Book and is aimed at Level 2 Referees. Please give the Decision number, but you should be able to give the Rule number and possibly the sub-paragraph from memory! Ideally we want a decision within 3 minutes.

1. A player lifted his ball on the putting green and, while waiting for his opponent or a fellow-competitor to play, dropped his ball off the green and played a few practice putts. Is there a penalty?
2. In a match between A and B, B made a statement which A interpreted to mean that his (A's) next stroke was conceded. Accordingly, A lifted his ball. B then said that he had not conceded A's next stroke.
3. In a match, A believing he has won a hole picks up the coin marking the position of his opponent B's ball. In fact B had a putt to halve the hole. Should the picking up of B's ball-marker be considered a concession of B's next stroke?
4. In a match between A and B, A has made two strokes and the ball with which he made his second stroke out of the rough is on the green. B, having played five, concedes the hole to A. A then discovers that he has played a wrong ball to the green. What is your ruling?
5. A player played a stroke at his ball in an environmentally-sensitive area from which play is prohibited or took his stance in such an area in playing a stroke. What is your ruling?

shot, then a penalty drop, then another shot which landed on the green, then two putts to finish with a 7. However, it was just as the pin was being placed in the bottom of the cup, that someone in the group behind told me what really happened. The player had gone forward to determine as to whether his ball was in a hazard, had started searching for the ball, then had walked back within the five minutes of the search, dropped a ball and played it as a provisional ball, to which the original ball was found within the five minutes.

Unfortunately such an action is not a legitimate action, and it was this 'provisional ball' (second ball) that now had become the ball in play, but due to the confusion I had instructed the player to play the original ball.

I quickly got myself down to the next tee to stop the player hitting off so that the facts could be established. It was there that I was able to clear the air with all players, and decided that the player's second ball was the ball in play and was required to be holed out. I didn't penalise the player for hitting a wrong ball, as per Decision 34-3/3.3, a wrong ruling had initially been given due to confusion.

The second ball that had been lying in a bunker had been picked up by a fellow-competitor, so there was no penalty involved there. Luckily, the trail from the ball landing in the bunker was still observable, so I had the fellow-competitor help the player replace the ball in the bunker and then the player played the shot onto the green, took two putts to hole out and finished with a 7 (the same score).

The incident has certainly made me aware of the importance of establishing the facts, and not just assuming what the player is saying is exactly what happened or that they know the Rules.

R&A Tournament Administrators and Referees School

Australian delegates Matt Field (Golf Queensland's Golf Operations Officer) and Cameron Vincent (Golf Australia's Manager - Championships and Rules) attended the recent TARS in St Andrews. Matt provides an insight into this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Fairmont St Andrews played host to 85 international participants at the R&A's 2017 Tournament Administrators and Referees School (TARS) from February 7-10. Refereeing and tournament experiences were many and varied with the universal code of Rules 1 to 34 proving an ideal ice-breaker for those not fluent in Swedish, German or Ukrainian. It was an action packed week full of lively discussion and first class presentations.

My week with The R&A:

Monday:

Whilst the School proper had not commenced, participants were provided with a unique opportunity to visit the R&A Equipment Test Centre at Kingsbarns, where we were shown what happens behind the scenes in determining the conformity of golf balls and equipment. It was surprising to discover how many submissions are made annually with items ranging from the latest "bells'n'whistles" driver to the humble tee.

Tuesday:

A hive of nervousness greeted myself and fellow Australian delegate Cameron Vincent as we proceeded through registration and into a welcome address from Rules of Golf Committee Chairman David Bonsall. The afternoon was filled with practical rules demonstrations from R&A Rules staff before a brief run-through of what we were to expect from Wednesday's famous (or infamous) exam. An early night was had by all, as we retreated to our hotel rooms to cram in that last ounce of revision.

Wednesday:

Two breakfast coffees and I was good to go for the exam! The first section is closed book with no reference material available. In this part we were asked to recall rules numbers and sub sections relevant to a range of situations. Despite feeling like I was missing my safety net, I quickly and semi-successfully progressed through to the open book sections. For the next 2 hours I was buried in the Decisions and Rules books, answering multiple choice questions and providing Decision numbers for each. The final 40% is devoted to providing possible penalties to a fictitious player as we follow him around for 6 holes. This poor bloke would probably give up golf if he was real – he's never out of trouble!!

For the remainder of the day we covered topics such as Amateur Status, Pace of Play, Course Marking, Starting and Recording, and Golf Development. A hearty dinner and a few beverages brought out the conversation and even a trans-hemisphere game of pool/billiards.

Thursday:

Day 3 was thoroughly entertaining and informative, with a strong focus on the art of refereeing. Former European Tour players Robert-Jan Derksen and Gary



Orr regaled the delegates with often humorous stories of their interactions with referees over their 20 year careers. It was refreshing to hear their perceptions of referees and they stressed that it wasn't personal when they questioned our rulings – they just pushed as far as they could to get what they wanted!

Andy McFee (Chief Referee – PGA European Tour), the man whose job we all secretly covet, gave us an hour and a half of enlightening advice and tales from the tour. A referee with a sense of humour – shhh, don't tell the players!!! But in all seriousness, I believe it was extremely beneficial to those who haven't been in that potentially stressful environment, to see that a referee is most effective when personable and not lecturing players while trying to assist them. Andy was definitely the star of the School and it was a pleasure to later dine with him and discuss the skills of refereeing.

Another considerable component of the School is performing referee duties in front of your peers, as The R&A staff do whatever possible to test you with rulings. I almost made it through my first one, but Grant Moir's (Director – Rules) stunning portrayal of a shady non-communicative player distracted me enough to miss the last part of the ruling. Having settled my nerves and enjoyed a good laugh with Grant, I'm happy to report I nailed my final rulings. All the R&A staff (Grant, Claire Hargan, Shona McRae, Daniel Somerville) and Chairman of the Amateur Status Committee, David Wybar, as well as Andy McFee are to be applauded for immersing themselves in their roles as players and caddies.

Friday:

The week of learning wrapped up with group discussions focusing on the current rules issues and the rules review that The R&A have recently undertaken. There were several suggestions on how to improve, notably water hazards, dropping, advice and repairing spike marks on greens. We now anticipate positive implementation moving forward.

The highlight of the week was definitely the invitation to the St Andrews Clubhouse. Wall to wall historical paintings, artefacts and trophy cabinets left me in awe, reflecting on the adventure that has led me to one of the world's most revered golf venues. It truly is the home of golf. We were fortunate to enjoy some of Scotland's finest single malts and robust conversation with a delicious dinner. It was a pleasure to spend a few hours discussing golf, both past issues and future opportunities, with Bill McCarthy from the USGA who, amongst other roles, serves as Championship Director for the U.S. Amateur Championship.

After a few candid photos in the R&A Secretary's office and with the Open and Amateur Championship trophies, it was time to bid farewell to the amazing R&A staff, presenters and fellow delegates. It truly was a once in a lifetime experience - one for which I'm overwhelmingly thankful to Golf Australia and Golf Queensland for enabling me to enjoy.

Tournament Administrators and Referees School

This four day Level 3 Tournament Administrators and Referees School (TARS) is only conducted by The R&A.

A TARS in St Andrews is held annually, usually in February, and it is The R&A's premier School. All of The R&A's Affiliates are invited to send a maximum of two delegates. Additional TARS courses are held around the world, e.g. South America, Africa and Asia to meet demand.

The purpose of a TARS is to give guidance and advice on running tournaments and refereeing. There is no lecturing on individual Rules at a TARS and so delegates are assumed to have a very good knowledge of the Rules before attending.



Golf Australia

Rules Quiz Answers

Answers to Level 1 Quiz - Rule Numbers

1. Loose Impediments
2. Ball in Motion Deflected or Stopped
3. Substituted ball; Wrong Ball
4. Teeing Ground
5. Practice
6. Stroke Play
7. Ball Lost or Out of Bounds. Provisional Ball
8. Ball Assisting or Interfering with Play
9. Ball at Rest Moved
10. Striking the Ball

Answers to Level 1 Quiz using Rule Book

1. Rule 19-3
2. Rule 15-3
3. Rule 6-7
4. Rule 20-3
5. Rule 20-7
6. Rule 16-1a
7. Rule 13-4
8. Rule 14-1b
9. Rule 14-2b
10. Rule 20-2c

Decision Book Answers

1. Yes. Decision 7-2/3. Under Rule 7-2 the player lost the hole in match play or incurred a penalty of two strokes in stroke play.
2. Decision 2-4/3. If B's statement could reasonably have led A to think his next stroke had been conceded, in equity (Rule 1-4), A should replace his ball as near as possible to where it lay, without penalty.

Otherwise, A would incur a penalty stroke for lifting his ball without marking its position – Rule 20-1 – and he must replace his ball as near as possible to where it lay.

3. Decision 2-4/5. No. In equity (Rule 1-4), A should be penalised one stroke. Therefore, under the second paragraph of Rule 2-2 the hole is automatically halved.
4. Decision 2-4/9. A lost the hole (Rule 15-3a) before B conceded it to him. Therefore, B's concession was irrelevant.
5. Decision 33-8/43. The answer depends on how the Committee has defined the environmentally-sensitive area.

Ground Under Repair, Water Hazard or Lateral Water hazard: If the ball was in the environmentally-sensitive area, or if the player took his stance in the environmentally-sensitive area to play a stroke at his ball which was lying outside the environmentally-sensitive area, he loses the hole in match play or he incurs a penalty of two strokes in stroke play for a breach of the Local Rule. In stroke play he must play out the hole with that ball unless a serious breach of the Local Rule has occurred – see Decision 33-8/44.

Out of Bounds: If the ball was in the environmentally-sensitive area, the player played a wrong ball – see Decision 15/6. Accordingly, in match play the player loses the hole. In stroke play he incurs a two stroke penalty and is required to proceed under Rule 27-1, incurring the additional one stroke penalty prescribed by that Rule.

If the player took his stance in the environmentally-sensitive area to play a ball which was in bounds, the ruling would be the same as that for *Ground Under Repair, Water hazard or Lateral Water hazard*.

In all cases, the player may have broken the law or be subject to other disciplinary action for having entered the environmentally-sensitive area.

